

# Bulgaria: Ethnic Dress

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Over many centuries, Bulgaria's complicated history brought peoples of various ethnicities into the region. In the seventh century C.E., the Bulgars, originally a Turkic-Tartar tribe, united with the Slavonic tribes who had settled in the region two centuries before in order to resist the Byzantines. The first Bulgarian state was founded and, while the new nationality took the name of the Bulgars, it was culturally strongly influenced by Slavonic civilization, including in terms of dress.

In the eleventh century, the whole of Bulgaria became a Byzantine province. Over the following centuries, struggles continued, and the balance of power changed back and forth. By the end of the fourteenth century, most of the region was overrun by the Ottoman Turks. A movement for Bulgarian national and religious independence developed around the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In 1877, Russia's war with the Ottomans helped to liberate Bulgaria, but large parts of former Bulgarian territory returned to Turkish control, and decades of conflict ensued. After defeat in the First World War, Bulgaria was forced to cede the regions of southwest Thrace to Greece and most of Macedonia to Serbia.

Toward the end of the Second World War, Bulgarian army officers and partisan brigades joined forces with the Soviets, leading to the abolition after the war of the Bulgarian monarchy and the establishment of the Communist Peoples' Republic. The Communist state came to an end when a coalition government was appointed in 1991.

Those ethnic groups whose rural way of life of farming and stock breeding persisted despite all these turbulent political events retained many characteristics of their own particular cultures, including dress, well into the twentieth century. And while the area included in the modern state of Bulgaria is relatively small compared to earlier stages of its history, there are still a number of distinct ethnographic zones into which it can be divided. The basic structure of the ethnic dress worn by both men and women has been influenced by the specific history of each zone.

Women's dress generally falls into three characteristic structures: outfits based on the double apron, on the *soukman* (tunic), and on the *saya* (open-fronted coat). Men's dress divides broadly into two types: *belodresnik* (the "white dress") and *chernodresnik* (the dark or "black dress").

The garments forming Bulgarian ethnic dress are the clothes 'worn for everyday use that have developed over time into festive

clothing by the addition of extra layers and richer decoration and that continue to be worn for folklore events and special occasions. Traditionally, the form of dress was dependant on the wearer's age, marital status, wealth, and occupation. The most elaborate garments, with the richest decoration and heaviest metal jewelry, were worn by younger people, especially for weddings and other festival occasions. After marriage, brides universally covered their heads with scarves, and, as women passed into maturity or widowhood, they wore fewer and less-decorated garments. The outfits worn by men did not change with age to the same extent, but instead reflected the social standing and occupation of the wearer, especially in the towns that were at the center of the movement toward Bulgarian national revival (1762–1878) and had been subject to greater influences of Ottoman fashion.

## WOMEN'S ETHNIC DRESS

The individual clothes that determine the basic structures of Bulgarian women's dress include overgarments that are joined at the shoulders and are considered to have evolved from the *sarafan* (the pinafore dress typically worn by women of various Slav nations). This type of garment includes the *soukman* and the *saya* and aprons that fasten at the waist that are also attributed to a Slavic origin. The choice of garments worn depended on the ethnographic zone, the prevailing fashion, and the season of the year. In all cases, a long chemise was worn underneath. This was originally made of homespun white hempen or linen fabric, with homespun cotton or silk becoming available in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The most common style of chemise worn with all styles of Bulgarian ethnic dress was the *riza* (straight-style chemise). This was made from a single width of fabric with a round hole and short slit cut for the neck and two rectangles of fabric joined at the shoulders to form the sleeves. Extra gussets were often added under the arms and at the sides to give extra width. *Riza* were decorated with embroidery around the neck, the front opening, and along the sleeves or at the sleeve ends, using predominantly red, augmented with green or blue, silk or cotton thread. Chemises worn under *soukman* or *saya* had less decoration than those worn with double apron ensembles, because less of the fabric was visible. This especially applied to chemises made for wearing with *soukman* after around 1900, when the embroidery was often replaced by a row of white or pale blue crochet lace on the hem and sleeve ends. Chemises worn with *saya* were usually undecorated but could be made from white cotton fabric woven with colored stripes, giving the fabric extra texture.

A chemise with a gathered neckline called a *burchanka* was worn with certain variants of the double apron ensemble in the north part of Bulgaria. This style of chemise was made using two separate wide pieces of fabric for the front and back, gathered into the neckline. The sleeves were also fuller and gathered into the neck and at the cuffs. Sometimes triangular gussets were inserted over the shoulders. *Burchanka* chemises were decorated on the front and back with smocking across the gathers and down the sleeves with wide rows of delicate embroidered motifs worked in





Two women from Eastern Thrace, Bulgaria, about 2005. They wear a contemporary version of traditional ethnic dress of the area, featuring an apron that fastens at the waist over a white chemise. Photograph by Liz Mellish.

cotton or silk thread. Red predominated in the northwest, with the colors becoming darker toward the center of northern Bulgaria, until black predominated in the northeast.

### SAYA, SOUKMAN, AND APRON

The open-fronted saya was found in the south and southwest of Bulgaria, in the regions of Pirin and the Rhodope Mountains, and had similarities with dress styles worn in Turkey and parts of Greece. Saya were made of plain-colored or striped woven woolen, linen, or cotton cloth and could be knee length or longer. The neck opening was usually round, and the sleeves could be short or long. The side seams were often slit from just below the waist to give extra freedom of movement. Saya were usually worn with a front apron made of a single or double width of plain, striped, or checked woven cloth.

There were two main variants of saya. A short-sleeved saya made of plain-colored woven fabric—wool for the winter and hemp or linen for the summer—was worn in the southwest of Bulgaria. This could be white, blue, black, or green, and it varied from knee length to calf length. This style of saya was decorated around the neck, the front opening, and sleeve ends with rows of multicolored braiding and gold thread. It was worn with a woven waistband and a front apron made of woven fabric that could be plain, most often red or green, or woven with horizontal stripes in red, gold, or black and edged with gold or black velvet braid.

Further east, saya made of striped material were introduced in the second half of the nineteenth century. These usually had long sleeves and were calf or ankle length. Those from along the Maritsa River were predominantly red in color, often striped, and made of woolen material, whereas those from further east in the Rhodope Mountains were multicolored and made of thinner materials, such as cotton or silk. This style of saya and the associated apron had little decoration. The saya could be plain or have braid applied along the edges of the front opening, hem, side slits, and sleeve ends, with the associated apron being made of a single piece of undecorated striped or checked woven cloth. Saya continued to be worn in this area until the mid-twentieth century, which is later than ethnic dress was worn in other parts of Bulgaria.

The soukman was found in the central Thracian plain, along the northern foothills of the Stara Planina mountain range, near the Black Sea coast, around Sofia in western Bulgaria, and in the central Rhodopes. This type of tunic is made from a single piece of black or dark blue felted woolen cloth or woven linen, hemp, or cotton or from two pieces of cloth joined at the shoulders. The neckline is either round or a deep V shape. Soukman can be sleeveless, short-sleeved—in which case, the pieces of cloth forming the sleeves are fitted to the body of the garment at the shoulders—or long-sleeved (only in the central Rhodopes). The structure of the soukman is thought to have evolved from the wearing of two chemises on top of each other, with the top chemise being shorter to show the decoration on the underchemise. This older variant existed until the end of the eighteenth century around Sofia.

Three main types of soukman developed in Bulgaria. In the west, the soukman was knee length, with extra gussets added at waist level to make it wider, and decorated around the neck opening with colored braid, gold thread, or sequins. In the center of Bulgaria, the soukman was ankle length, with long gussets sewn into the main body of the garment below the arms. Soukman from central Bulgaria were decorated around the neck with brightly colored geometric or floral embroidery worked in wool or silk thread and a border of multicolored appliquéd strips in felt or gold cloth around the hem, which was wide in versions from the southeast and narrower in those from along the slopes of the Stara Planina. Soukman from the eastern slopes of the Stara Planina Mountains had a short, sleeveless bodice with a separate but attached skirt made of several widths of fabric gathered at the back and flat at the front, where it was covered by the apron.

Soukman were worn with a front apron except in parts of western Bulgaria. This apron was made of a single width of woven woolen cloth and tied around the waist using narrow cords. In central Bulgaria, the apron was usually decorated on the lower third only, with brightly colored embroidered floral motifs worked in wool or silk. In the west, when aprons were worn, they were made of cloth woven with horizontal stripes in red, gold, or silver thread.

The double apron style of ethnic dress was worn in northern Bulgaria on the Danube Plain, alongside the soukman outfit on the northern slopes of the Stara Planina, and in the northwest. This style of dress had similarities with outfits worn across the Danube in Romania. It comprised two woven woolen aprons worn over the chemise, one at the front and one at the back. The narrow front apron was made of one or two widths of fabric joined with a horizontal seam. The back apron could also be narrow or, alternatively, was made of several widths of fabric joined





A man from central Bulgaria in traditional ethnic dress, playing a tambura, about 2005. He wears a collared cotton shirt tucked into dark woolen trousers, under a dark waistcoat with contrasting embroidery work. Photograph by Liz Mellish.

either horizontally or vertically and gathered or pleated to fit the waist.

There were three variants of the *bruchnik* (gathered back apron). In the northwest of Bulgaria, it was made of two widths of woolen fabric woven in red and black vertical stripes. It was worn with a front apron made of red and black horizontal-striped fabric, which was often edged with a broad band of black velvet, and crisscrossed by rows of gold braid to which small coins were attached. In central-north Bulgaria, the gathered back apron was made of plain dark blue or black fabric with either a narrow woven colored border at the lower edge or a wide edging of black velvet with a row of floral embroidery worked in woolen thread above it. The front apron worn with this ensemble was predominantly black with horizontal woven stripes in red, pink, white, or green, again edged with black velvet. In the northeast, the back apron, made of black fabric, was gathered or pleated, with a narrow row of predominantly red embroidery, decorated with gold thread and sequins at the hem. The front apron worn with this outfit was wider, being made of two widths of woven red fabric with a vertical seam, gathered at the upper end and decorated on the lower edge with gold braid and lace.

A style of dress consisting of a chemise worn with a single front apron still exists in certain isolated areas such as the eastern Rhodopes, where it is worn alongside the *saya* outfit, or as a variant of local dress that is worn for work in the fields or as casual wear in summer. In this case, the apron is made from either a single or double width of fabric woven either with stripes or geometric motifs.

## WOMEN'S BELTS, HEADWEAR, AND JEWELRY

A narrow woven belt was worn with all these styles of women's ethnic dress. Belts were woven with an ancient technique using small squares of leather or cardboard. Those in the northwest were long, woven in colored stripes, and worn wound around the waist. In the northeast, they were red and could be edged with tiny white beads. Fabric belts worn with *soukman* were usually shorter, being only long enough to go once around the waist, and were joined at the front with a *pafka* (ornamental buckle). *Pafka* comprised two plates of embossed silver or other metal alloys joined by a hook. Made by craftsmen in urban workshops, they could be oval, round, or palmette shaped and were sometimes decorated with enamel, mother-of-pearl, semiprecious stones, or fragments of colored glass. The largest and most ornate *pafka* were worn by brides in central and western Bulgaria. In north and central Bulgaria, metal belts worn for weddings could also be made of interlocking squares of metal, silver chains, or silver filigree, with decoration in enamel.

Wider woven belts made of plain or striped material were worn with *saya* in the Rhodopes. In the central and eastern Rhodopes, belts incorporated a square of fringed material folded diagonally and tied around the waist with the ends at the front and the point downward at the back, in a style also seen further east in Turkey and Cyprus.

The traditional hairstyle for unmarried women was to wear their hair in many plaits that might be tied into one braid. In the north and west, young girls wore headbands decorated with feathers, coins, flowers, and ribbons. Prior to the twentieth century, for weddings the hair was arranged in complex styles formed with multiple plaits; in the north and southwest, brides wore a specific headband made of decorative metal chains forming a crown.

Married women covered their heads with scarves of colored silk or cotton, sometimes worn over a small hat. Women from central Bulgaria often had a row of false plaits pinned to their heads under the scarves. In the north, a thin white cotton scarf with fringes, sometimes edged with a row of small beads, was worn wound around the head. In the northeast, women wore brightly colored fringed shawls on their heads; in the Rhodopes, they wore long striped cotton scarves.

The style of jewelry worn with Bulgarian ethnic dress was strongly influenced by Ottoman fashions but with certain ancient elements, such as the over-the-ear pendants worn by brides in northern Bulgaria, which are similar to those found in Slavic excavations. During the period of national revival, workshops in the prosperous towns made earrings, bracelets, necklaces, and rings of silver filigree or cast copper or silver, often decorated with enamel. Young women also wore necklaces made from rows of small coins, colored beads, or shells.



## MEN'S ETHNIC DRESS

Two main styles of ethnic clothing were worn by men, representing consecutive stages in the development of fashions in Bulgaria. The older style, known as *belodresnik* (white dress) was similar to that worn in the surrounding countries of southeastern Europe and is considered to have very ancient origins. Belodresnik continued to be worn in the northern Bulgarian plains and in parts of southwestern Bulgaria until the beginning of the twentieth century, when it was replaced by factory-made Western-style clothing.

The more widespread style was called *chernodresnik* (dark dress). This was strongly influenced by Ottoman fashions and almost totally replaced belodresnik in central, east, and northeast Bulgaria during the national revival period in the nineteenth century. Its spread was encouraged by the desire of rural dwellers to imitate the dress of men living in the prosperous towns.

In western Bulgaria, around Sofia, a mixture of these two styles of dress occurred, with white older-style trousers being worn with dark blue woolen jackets. This style originated in the late nineteenth century in the western Bulgarian towns that were subject to stronger influences of West European fashions and thus superseded the wearing of the chernodresnik Ottoman-influenced style in this area.

Shirts worn with Bulgarian ethnic dress were straight (or tunic shaped), made of a single piece of homespun fabric—originally hemp or linen—with a hole and slit made for the head.



Women from Rousse, northern Bulgaria, about 2005. They wear red gathered-front aprons featuring white horizontal stripes and decorative white lace. Photograph by Liz Mellish.

The sleeves were constructed of two rectangular pieces of fabric joined to the main part of the shirt at the shoulders. Shirts worn with belodresnik were typically either knee or calf length and were worn over the trousers, which were gathered in at the waist by a wide fabric belt. These shirts were usually collarless, and the sleeves were open at the wrists. Geometric embroidered motifs decorated the neck opening and sleeve ends. Shirts from the Pirin region in the southwest had extra gussets inserted to make a very wide skirt, or, alternatively, several widths of material were gathered into a separate kilt, the *fustanella*, worn over the shirt and white trousers.

Shirts worn with chernodresnik were normally of cotton fabric, originally homespun but later factory made. These shirts were generally intended for wear under waistcoats or jackets, so they were less full and cut shorter than those worn with belodresnik, enabling them to be tucked into the dark woolen trousers. They usually had a collar and cuffed sleeves and little or no embroidered decoration.

Two types of older-style trousers were worn with belodresnik. Winter trousers, made of white fulled woolen cloth, were long and tight fitting. This style developed from the ancient form of legwear where two separate leggings were tied on around the waist. Summer trousers were made of linen or cotton fabric and were wider and shorter, reaching to just below the knee.

During the national revival period, craft workshops were established in towns, taking over home-based tailoring. This move to urban workshops encouraged the popularity of Ottoman fashions in men's clothing, and belodresnik was gradually replaced from east to west by clothes made from dark woolen fabric in Oriental styles. The style of trousers worn with chernodresnik was known as *poturi* or *shalvari*, terms derived from those for a similar style of trousers used further east. Poturi were wide from the knee upward, with the fabric gathered into the waist by means of a cord or buttoned up at the front. It was considered that a man's wealth could be judged by the fullness of the poturi he wore. Poturi were fitted below the knees, narrowing to the ankles, and could be decorated with black silk braid applied around the side pockets and along the lower edges.

A wide belt made of woven woolen fabric was worn with both styles of men's dress. Typical belts worn with chernodresnik were red with woven or embroidered stripes in white, or they were made of black-and-red checked fabric. A narrow leather belt, sometimes decorated with brass studs, was often worn over the fabric waistband.

Sheepskin hats (*kalpak*) were worn with both belodresnik and chernodresnik. These could be cylindrical, semicylindrical, or cone shaped and were made by urban-based furriers using lamb's fleece stretched over a wooden last. In some areas, kalpaks were worn over a red cloth skullcap.

## MEN'S AND WOMEN'S OVERGARMENTS, FOOTWEAR, AND ACCESSORIES

The simplest form of overgarment throughout Bulgaria, for both work and festive wear, was the hooded shepherd's cloak. These cloaks were made from either brown wool or goat's hair or a mix of the two woven to make a fabric with alternate brown and white rectangles. This style of dress is considered to have ancient



origins, with similar cloaks being worn by Thracian men depicted on Greek vases.

In northern Bulgaria, overgarments for both men and women were made from felted white woolen cloth, usually open in front, and slightly flared. They could be waist, hip, or calf length and sleeveless, short-sleeved, or long-sleeved. Those for festive wear were decorated with red or black applied braid and embroidery around the gussets, pockets, and edges.

Two types of dark woolen cloth jacket were worn by men with *chernodresnik*, their styles being influenced by Ottoman fashions. A round-necked, double-breasted, sleeveless waistcoat was buttoned up the front with two rows of buttons. The other type was waist length with long sleeves. Both were decorated with black braid applied along the seams and front opening and around the pockets and neck opening.

In western Bulgaria, men's jackets were often of blue or black woolen material, short- or long-sleeved, slightly flared or cut into the waist, imitating Western rather than Ottoman fashions. In summer, long white linen or cotton sleeveless jackets edged with a single row of black braid were worn with a wide red woven belt over them.

With the *saya* outfit, women wore a long- or short-sleeved waist-length overgarment made of black, dark blue, or dark red woolen fabric edged with woolen braid. From the late nineteenth century, sleeveless waistcoats worn with double apron or *soukman* dress in central-north and northeast Bulgaria were made of black or maroon factory-produced velvet, were often padded, and could be decorated with black beads and ornamental buttons. In eastern Thrace, close to the Black Sea, a specific type of sleeveless overgarment was worn; it was made of thick black woolen fabric and covered with fringes.

*Tservuli* (peasant sandals) of cow or pigskin were worn by men with both styles of Bulgarian ethnic dress and by women in poorer areas of the country. *Tservuli* were made of one piece of leather gathered to fit the foot. They could be boat shaped or pointed in front and were held onto the foot by hempen cords or strips of leather that were tied round the legs, or they had a

T-strap made of a separate piece of leather joined to the center front of the sandal with a slit for the leather ties.

*Tservuli* were traditionally worn over leg wraps or knitted socks. Leg wraps were made from pieces of homespun cloth wound around the legs and held on with black goat-hair string. In many areas, these wraps were replaced, especially among women, by woolen socks knitted on five needles. Those worn by men usually have a black background with multicolored stripes and small patterns worked in between, whereas women's socks are either natural colored or have brightly colored stripes.

In central Bulgaria, women wore low leather shoes with the *soukman* dress. Embroidered felt slippers made of thick felted woolen material for indoor wear were introduced by the Ottomans and were similar to those worn in Turkey and Greece. Men seldom wore leather boots with ethnic dress, except in a few richer villages in central Bulgaria.

Decorated cotton kerchiefs, embroidered and edged with coins or beads, were common accessories for both men and women. These would be tucked into waistbands, worn crossed over the chest at weddings, or used as props on festive occasions. Knitted armlets covering the arm below the elbow or gloves decorated with stripes were worn as protection from the sun or the cold or for festive occasions.

Rural depopulation took place in Bulgaria from the beginning of the twentieth century, and, at the same time, the production of homespun fabrics declined. The ethnic garments that can be seen in the early twenty-first century are either those preserved in ethnographic museums, which are mainly items of festive dress from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, or those worn by performers at the National Folk Festival in the village of Koprivshtitsa held every five years or at one of the similar smaller folk festivals that are held more frequently. These garments are a mixture of items hand-made up to one hundred years ago, which have been handed down through several generations, and more recent pieces made in traditional styles from factory-made materials, often decorated with purchased braid rather than hand embroidery.

## Snapshot: Links between Bulgarian and Romanian Ethnic Dress on the Danube Plain

**T**he flat plain on either side of the Danube River is bisected as the river flows through Romania and Bulgaria, forming the political boundary between the two countries. Throughout history, this area has been inhabited by many tribes, and over the years there have been many population movements across the river for both political and economic reasons. This has led to considerable homogenization in the ethnic dress worn on both sides of the Danube and by people who consider themselves either ethnic Bulgarian or Romanian.

Chemises with gathered necklines were worn by women in the west of both Romania and Bulgaria, and in both countries

this changed to straight-cut chemises toward the east. In the northwest corner of Bulgaria, around the town of Vidin, and in the southwest of Romania, the women's outfit consisted of two narrow aprons usually made of red-and-black striped material. Moving eastward in both countries, a gathered back apron was worn with a narrow front apron. The western variant of this in both countries was a back apron made of red-and-black material with vertical stripes. In Bulgaria, it was normally worn with a red-and-black horizontal-striped narrow front apron, while in Romania it was found both with a narrow apron or alternatively worn wrapped around the body overlapping at the front, with no front apron.





Banat Bulgarians from the village of Asenovo, near the River Danube, July 2005. The woman on the left wears the traditional dress of an older Banat woman, with a long-sleeved waist-length dark woolen jacket and a long gathered striped skirt. Both women wear large fringed shawls in bright colors and small brocade bonnets. Photograph by Liz Mellish.

In an area beside the Danube River in central south Romania and in a group of villages in Bulgaria close to the Danube, north of Pleven, women wore two straight aprons made of red woven fabric with white, yellow, green, blue, and black woven geometric motifs in horizontal bands on the lower third and decorated with sequins and small colored glass beads. The chemises worn with these aprons were decorated with floral embroidery highlighted with small beads and sequins.

Around Pleven, waist- or knee-length sheepskin jackets or waistcoats were worn. This is the only area in Bulgaria where these jackets, which are more characteristic of Romania, were found. Sheepskin jackets and waistcoats destined for festive wear on both sides of the Danube were edged with black fur and decorated with spirals and rosettes worked in colored wool and applied strips of red leather. In the same areas, sleeveless hip-length waistcoats made of white fullered wool were worn. These were decorated around the pocket edges and front opening with red braid, red felt appliqué, and embroidery in red, black, and yellow woolen thread.

Further east in both countries, the back apron was made of gathered or finely pleated black or dark blue fabric. On both sides of the Danube, in the area around the only major river crossing between the town of Rousse, Bulgaria, and

Giurgiu, Romania, women wore a combination of a black gathered back apron edged with a narrow row of red geometric embroidery decorated with sequins and a red gathered front apron with white horizontal stripes and decorated with rows of white lace; on the Romanian side, the front apron was often worn inside the back apron. In both countries, a slightly flared, waist-length waistcoat made of padded velvet was also worn.

Close to the Black Sea coast, a straight-cut chemise was worn in both countries. A brightly colored soukman was worn over this in Bulgaria, whereas two straight aprons or a single apron and skirt were worn in Romania. However, the aprons worn in both countries were similar, being made of a narrow width of dark-colored linen, woven with vertical bands of diamond-shaped motifs.

These parallels also extended to men's clothing. In north-west Bulgaria, the long white shirts, white trousers, and fabric belts of the *belodresnik* (white dress) had the same structure as men's dress across the Danube in southern Romania. Traveling across north Bulgaria from west to east, *belodresnik* gave way to the darker, Ottoman-influenced *chernodresnik* (dark dress). This form of dress was also found in villages along the north banks of the Danube and parts of southeastern Romania, especially Romanian Dobrogea; unlike the rest of Romania, this area was, for part of its history, under Ottoman rule.

Population movements across the Danube also resulted in modifications to styles of dress. A group of Catholic Bulgarians from northern Bulgaria were forced to leave Bulgaria after the Chiprovitsi uprising against the Ottomans in 1688. They finally settled in several villages on the Banat Plain in southwest Romania. After Bulgaria was liberated from the Ottomans in 1878, some families returned to Bulgaria and settled in five villages north of Pleven. These people brought back with them a distinctive style of dress that represented a mixture of the Bulgarian dress they had taken with them and garments copied from their Romanian, Hungarian, German, and Slovakian neighbors in multicultural Banat.

The men's dress consisted of a very short black sleeveless waistcoat worn over a shirt tucked into tight-fitting leggings decorated with black braid appliqué in geometric patterns similar to those worn in the Hapsburg army, and also worn in western Romania by Romanians, and in eastern Transylvania by the Hungarian minority. Completing this outfit were a small white felt hat with an upturned brim and black leather boots. The outfit worn by young girls comprised a white blouse with wide, pleated sleeves; a long gathered skirt made of silk brocade; and a short brocade bolero edged with fringes (similar to the fringes on Romanian aprons from the Banat region). Older women wore a long-sleeved, waist-length, dark woolen jacket and a long gathered skirt made of red, black, green, or brown striped woolen material. In both cases, an apron made of a single width of red woolen material decorated with wide bands of gold braid was worn over the long skirt; this style was similar to those of northern Bulgaria. Large, fringed shawls made of brocade fabric were worn over the shoulders and crossed over the front (as in western Romania), and a small, brightly



colored brocade bonnet—similar to the style in Banat and in parts of Germany in the nineteenth century—was worn.

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**See also** Romania: Ethnic Dress.

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**See also** Romania: Ethnic Dress.